

Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Government Technology Collaboration Fund - 2001
Grant Application Form

Section I: General Information

A. Project Title: Workforce Investment Act Resource Centers

Submitting Agency (or Agencies): Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership

Contact Information for this Project

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B. Certification for Request

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information in this application is correct and that the application has been authorized by this entity to meet the obligations set forth in this application.

Name: Mark Schultz

Title: Director

Agency: Assistive Technology Partnership

Date: August 24, 2001

Total Grant Funds Requested: \$25,000

Total Project Costs: \$112,910

Section II: Executive Summary

Provide a one or two paragraph summary of the proposed project. This summary will be used in other externally distributed documents and should therefore clearly and succinctly describe the project and the information technology required.

This project will integrate assistive technology solutions into the Workforce Development One Stop Resource Centers to increase awareness of the potential of assistive technology to enhance the employability and productivity of persons with disabilities in competitive employment. Assistive technology solutions available for demonstration will include devices and accessibility alternatives that provide access to information technology (information systems, applications, and websites). Demonstration equipment at the One Stop Resource Centers will be available to individuals with disabilities, employers, programmers, and developers, which include the general public as well as state agencies and universities.

Section III: Goals and Objectives

1. Describe the project, including the specific goals and objectives.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 required the development of a coordinated workforce investment system. State and local governments worked together to design and implement programs to be provided through One Stop delivery systems to serve employers and employment and training seeking customers.

Nebraska will have 24 One Stop sites located across the state. Three avenues to access services have been established: Comprehensive Sites, Affiliate Sites, and Access Sites (locations are listed in Section VII. Technical Impact). Each of the sites will have a Resource Room that will offer, at a minimum, the most updated labor market information, unemployment access, employment, training, veteran's employment services, workers compensation, vocational rehabilitation, food stamp services, and linkages with colleges, universities, technical schools, and other One Stop partners. The Resource Centers will house information from all 19 mandated partners.

Standards have been developed for the Resource Centers to ensure statewide consistency. Each site will provide computer terminals for access to job search systems and Internet based databases. Computers will also have word processing and resume preparation software available for use by consumers. Staff at the Resource Centers will assist with the use of computers and software, locating materials, scheduling/coordinating use of the equipment, answering questions, and making referrals to other services.

This proposal will build off the services of the One Stop Resource Centers to expand the equipment available at each site to include assistive technology and information technology access solutions. Existing staff will be identified and trained to provide support on the operation, use, and benefits of the equipment for persons with disabilities, and to make referrals as appropriate to resources that can provide more detailed technical assistance.

Goal and Objectives

GOAL: TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

Objective One: The Assistive Technology Partnership will negotiate agreements with One Stop Centers to expand their Resource Centers to include assistive technology, including information technology solutions.

The Assistive Technology Partnership will work with the Regional Managers of the One Stop Centers, or their designees, to obtain a written agreement to participate in the project. Agreements will be pursued as One Stop Centers begin to operate. The projected timeline anticipates that all sites will be up and running within the next two years.

Sites receiving equipment will agree to:

- Provide space and equipment as necessary to integrate the assistive technology within the resource center;
- Designate at least one staff person to be trained on the operation, use and support of the assistive devices, computer hardware and software;
- Provide support to resource center users on the availability, operation, and benefits of the provided assistive technology;
- Utilize the assistive technology to assess its potential to increase the employability or productivity of the individual user; and as appropriate
- Refer individuals who require a greater degree of assistance to the appropriate resources (Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Assistive Technology Partnership).

Objective Two: The Assistive Technology Partnership will purchase the assistive devices for the One Stop Resource Centers.

Purchases for each of the sites will be based on the Equipment List (See Section VII. Technical Impact). The exact brand and specifications of purchased equipment may vary from the list but will be at least equivalent to the listed item. The Assistive Technology Partnership will seek out discounted prices or donated equipment to reduce overall costs to stay within available resources. Ownership of the equipment will remain with the Assistive Technology Partnership to facilitate updating, agreements with vendors, and relocating of equipment from site to site dependent on need and use by the Resource Centers.

Objective Three: The Assistive Technology Partnership will train designated Resource Center staff on the operation, use and benefits of the provided assistive technology, including information technology access.

The Assistive Technology Partnership will work with the Resource Centers to train the designated staff person(s) on the operation, use, and benefits of the provided assistive technology. Assistive Technology Partnership staff will be available to provide ongoing support as necessary for the assistive technology equipment. Training will be provided on equipment and software solutions that provide access to information technology for persons with a variety of disabilities. This will include information on Nebraska's Technology Access Clause (standards and guidelines) as well as other pertinent laws.

Trained Resource Center staff will be able to utilize the assistive technology to assess its potential to increase the employability or productivity of the individual user, and as appropriate, refer individuals who require a greater degree of assistance to the appropriate resources (Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Assistive Technology Partnership).

2. Describe the project's relationship to the agency's comprehensive technology plan.

One of the principal goals of the NITC is to expand citizen access to government information. This includes citizens with disabilities that have not been able to access information systems due to the inability of the system design to accommodate the assistive technology utilized to access information. The NITC, with the development of the Technology Access Clause (and standards and guidelines) by the Access Work Group of the Technical Panel, has begun to include a focus on the critical elements of the technical infrastructure necessary to address access issues. Greater awareness of these issues will help assure that accessibility is examined in the purchase and development of computer equipment and operating systems, databases, customized software, non-customized applications, local area networks, wide area networks, and telecommunications. The availability of information technology access solutions at the One Stop Resource Centers will provide tangible examples of assistive technology for design considerations. In addition, the Resource Center demonstration equipment will have the potential to be utilized as a test site for applications, web pages, and on-line forms that are being developed.

3. Describe, if applicable, how this project furthers the implementation of electronic government. [Preference will be given to projects which support the State Government Council's priority of implementing electronic government as reflected in the goals of the Business Portal Action Plan and the E-Government Strategy (available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/sgc/>).]

The implementation of the architecture and strategic plan for e-government will be enhanced by the availability of practical solutions on display at the One Stop Resource Centers across the state. Familiarity with hardware and software solutions for accessing information technology through the use of assistive devices can help with designing systems that minimize access issues for users with disabilities. For programmers and developers, these sites and the available equipment can serve to test on-line applications and web pages to assure they are accessible. This will also be critical as agencies assess the accessibility of the inventory of forms that are available on-line.

Section IV: Scope and Projected Outcomes

Describe the project's specific scope and projected outcomes. The narrative should address the following:

1. Beneficiaries of this project and the need(s) being addressed;

Beneficiaries of this project include:

Individuals with disabilities: Assistive technology at the One Stop Resource Centers will be available to consumers to access on-line information. Demonstration equipment will provide the opportunity for hands-on use and assessment of assistive technology's potential to address needs revolving around employability or productivity. This will include access to information technology that is a critical component of many employment opportunities.

Employers: Demonstration equipment will familiarize employers with the reasonable accommodations that can be provided to increase the number of available applicants for their job openings. Devices will include access features for telecommunication and information access.

Programmers and developers: The Resource Centers can serve as sites for testing applications, web pages, and on-line forms prior to making them available to the public, for their accessibility. Screen reading software, voice recognition software, and keyboard alternatives will be available to utilize in the testing process.

2. Expected outcomes of the project;

Placement of assistive technology that can be used to access information systems within an existing center makes use of already developed (or developing) sites which is more cost efficient, and a strategy that will increase availability across the state. This project has several expected outcomes:

- Increased collaboration by integrating assistive technology solutions into the One Stop Resource Centers;
- Increased awareness of assistive technology solutions to increase employment and productivity; and
- Increased awareness of access solutions for information technology, including computers, applications, web pages, and telecommunication.

3. Measurement and assessment methods that will verify project outcomes;

One Stop Resource Centers will be asked to track information on agencies that utilize the demonstration equipment for testing of applications, web pages, and on-line forms. The Assistive Technology Partnership will track the number of referrals that come from the One Stop Resource Centers for information on information technology

issues, including the Technology Access Clause, Section 508 of the Rehab Act, and Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act.

Section V: Project Justification / Business Case

Please provide the project justification in terms of tangible benefits (an economic return on investment) and/or intangible benefits to the agency or the public. The narrative should address the following:

1. Tangible: Economic cost/benefit analysis;

See #2 response.

2. Intangible: Benefits of the project for customers, clients, and citizens and/or benefits of the project for the agency;

No hard numbers are available on the cost savings if accessibility is accounted for in the design stage rather than having to provide alternative reasonable accommodations later. However, there are intangible benefits that will come from the availability of information technology solutions at the One Stop Resource Centers that will benefit consumers and agencies in the purchase and design of information systems. Utilizing the Resource Centers and integrating assistive technology solutions into their sites will provide opportunities for hands on use and testing of information technology access without incurring the expense of developing stand alone test sites. Resource Centers will be located at 24 sites across the state which greatly enhance availability for consumers, employers, programmers, and developers.

3. Other solutions that were evaluated and why they were rejected. Include their strengths and weaknesses. Explain the implications of doing nothing and why this option is not acceptable;

This project has developed out of a collaboration between Workforce Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Assistive Technology Partnership. The partners have agreed to provide a significant portion of the funding for this project. If this proposal is not funded, the funds available for assistive technology solutions will be reduced, resulting in fewer options available on site for access to information technology.

4. If the project is required to comply with a state or federal mandate, please so indicate.

While the project is not required in order to comply with the Technology Access Clause, Section 508 of the Rehab Act or Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act, it will greatly enhance the ability to comply for those required to do so. Demonstration equipment that can serve to try out applications, web pages, and forms prior to making them available to the public, can assist in ensuring compliance. This is true whether the information system is being developed in-house or by a contractor.

Section VI: Implementation

Describe the implementation plan -- from design through installation and ongoing support -- for the project. The narrative should address the following:

1. Project sponsor(s) and stakeholder acceptance analysis;

See #2 response.

2. Define the roles, responsibilities, and required experience of the project team;

A memorandum of understanding has been signed by the collaborating partners. Partnering agencies providing the funding and technical assistance for the assistive technology to be placed in the One Stop Resource Centers include:

Assistive Technology Partnership

Set up and training of AT (24 sites at an average of 8 hours per site for set-up, installation and training) in kind of \$11,520.

Will provide \$10,000 to purchase assistive technology for the Resource Centers.

Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Will assist in securing vision-related assistive technology for the Resource Centers.

Workforce Development, Department of Labor

Will provide \$25,000 to purchase assistive technology for the Resource Centers.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Will provide \$25,000 to purchase assistive technology for the Resource Centers.

3. List the major milestones and deliverables for each milestone;

Due to the fact that every One Stop Center is on a different timeline for beginning operation, a timeline for implementation has to be flexible to accommodate changes in progress. The milestones and deliverables are established in the project goals and objectives and the timeline for achievement will vary. However all Centers are scheduled to be in operation within 2 years. The One Stop Centers scheduled to be ready in the next sixty days are:

<u>Comprehensive Sites</u> Grand Island Area One Stop 1306 West 3 rd Street Grand Island One Stop Career Center 1010 N Street Lincoln Beatrice Area One Stop Center 5109 W Scott Rd, Suite 413 Beatrice Norfolk Workforce Development Center 105 E Norfolk Ave Norfolk Omaha Workforce Development Offices (2) 5404 Cedar Street 2421-23 N 24 th Street Omaha	North Platte Workforce Development Office 114 S Chestnut North Platte Scottsbluff Workforce Development Office 1717 Avenue C Scottsbluff <u>Affiliate Sites</u> Alliance Workforce Development Office 302 Box Butte Ave Alliance Sidney Workforce Development Office 927 23 rd Ave Sidney
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A Memorandum of Understanding has already been developed between the collaborating partners funding this project. Written agreements will be obtained from each participating One Stop Center prior to the purchase and installation of any assistive technology and based on their timeline for beginning operation. The equipment purchases will be inventoried and tracked to facilitate support and upgrading of available assistive devices.

4. Training and staff development requirements and procedures;

The Assistive Technology Partnership will work with the Resource Centers to train the designated staff person(s) on the operation, use, and benefits of the provided assistive technology. Assistive Technology Partnership staff will be available to provide ongoing support as necessary for the assistive technology equipment. Training will be provided on equipment and software solutions that provide access to information technology for persons with a variety of disabilities. This will include information on Nebraska's Technology Access Clause (standards and guidelines) as well as other pertinent laws.

5. Ongoing support requirements, plans and provisions.

This proposal will build off the services of the One Stop Resource Centers to expand the equipment available at each site to include assistive technology and information technology access solutions. Existing staff will be identified and trained to provide support on the operation, use, and benefits of the equipment for persons with disabilities, and to make referrals as appropriate to resources that can provide more detailed technical

assistance. The proposal funds will be used to purchase additional assistive technology only. The use of an existing support structure will ensure that the services under this proposal will continue long term.

Section VII: Technical Impact

Describe how the project enhances, changes or replaces present technology systems, or if new systems are being added. The narrative should address the following:

1. Descriptions of hardware, software, and communications requirements for this project. Describe the strength and weaknesses of the proposed solution;

Three levels or tiers of service will be provided at the One Stop Centers. Based on this design, the sophistication level of the assistive technology available will be relative to the level of service and support available at the particular One Stop Center. Tier One, the Comprehensive One Stops, will have the greatest degree of support available and are also anticipated to have the highest numbers of users. Tier Three will have a minimum level of support, so the devices at these locations will be self-explanatory requiring little support. Assistive devices, computer hardware and software will be provided to the comprehensive One Stop sites, the affiliate sites, and the access sites as detailed in the following equipment list.

<i>Resource Center Location</i>	<i>Equipment List</i>	<i>Cost</i>
TIER ONE- Comprehensive One-Stops Omaha (3 sites) Lincoln Grand Island Beatrice Norfolk Hastings Kearney Fremont Columbus North Platte Scottsbluff	<u>IN THE OFFICE</u>	
	Amplified Phone - Clarity Phone W100 (includes on/off switch & hold button)	\$79.95
	ErgoRest Articulating Arm Support	\$129.95
	Aladdin CCTV by Telesensory B&W System w/ 14" monitor -\$1,795	to be donated
	AlphaSmart (notetaker) and cable	\$244
	Reacher 25"	\$15.55
	Talking Calculator with Jumbo Readout	\$12.95
	Personal Pager with Vibrating Indicator	\$59.95
	<u>AT THE COMPUTER</u>	
	Adjustable Workstation	\$687
	Desktop Computer: Pentium III processor, 300 MHz or higher, 128 MB RAM, 8 GB Hard Drive, sound card, including 17" Monitor	\$1,500
	Voice Recognition Software Dragon NaturallySpeaking Preferred	\$249

	ZoomText (text magnification software) -Level 2 (Magnification + Screen Reader) -	\$595
	Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, Filter Keys, etc. - Accessibility options built into Windows 95/98	\$0
	Maxim Split Keyboard	\$139
	Contoured Keyboard by Kinesis	\$395
	Expert Mouse 5.0 Trackball for PC	\$125
	Half-QWERTY Software	\$400
	Co:Writer Word Prediction Software	\$324
	Write:Outloud Talking Work Processor	\$98
13X	Total Cost for all sites is ≈\$60,567	≈\$4,659

TIER TWO-Affiliate One-Stops	<u>IN THE OFFICE</u>	
Alliance	Amplified Phone -	
Falls City	Clarity Phone W100 (includes on/off switch & hold button)	\$79.95
Chadron		
Lexington	Reacher 25"	\$15.55
Nebraska City	Talking Calculator with Jumbo Readout	\$12.95
West Point	Personal Pager with Vibrating Indicator	\$59.95
Sidney		
McCook	<u>AT THE COMPUTER</u>	
	Adjustable Workstation	\$687
	Desktop Computer: Pentium III processor, 300 MHz or higher, 128 MB RAM, 8 GB Hard Drive, sound card, including 17" Monitor	\$1,500
	Voice Recognition Software	
	Dragon NaturallySpeaking Preferred -	\$249
	ZoomText (text magnification	\$595

	software) -Level 2 (Magnification + Screen Reader) -	
	Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, Filter Keys, etc. - Accessibility options built into Windows 95/98	\$0
	Maxim Split Keyboard	\$139
	Contoured Keyboard by Kinesis	\$395
	Expert Mouse 5.0 Trackball for PC	\$125
	Half-QWERTY Software	\$400
	Co:Writer Word Prediction Software	\$324
	Write:Outloud Talking Work Processor	\$98
8X	Total cost for all sites is ≈\$37,448	≈\$4,681

TIER THREE-Access Sites	<u>IN THE OFFICE</u>	
Bassett/Long Pine Dakota City Holdrege	Amplified Phone - Clarity Phone W100 (includes on/off switch & hold button)	\$79.95
	Reacher 25"	\$15.55
	Talking Calculator with Jumbo Readout	\$12.95
	Personal Pager with Vibrating Indicator	\$59.95
	<u>AT THE COMPUTER</u>	
	Recycled PC (Pentium or faster)	\$0
	ZoomText (text magnification software) -Level 2 (Magnification + Screen Reader) -	\$595
	Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, Filter Keys, etc. - Accessibility options built into Windows 95/98	\$0
	Maxim Split Keyboard	\$139
	Expert Mouse 5.0 Trackball for PC	\$125
	Write:Outloud Talking Work Processor	\$98
X3	Total Costs for all sites is \approx \$3,375	\approx \$1,125

- Issues pertaining to reliability, security and scalability;

The equipment being provided under this proposal build off of existing computer terminals that will be available in the One Stop Resource Centers.

- Conformity with applicable NITC technical standards and guidelines (available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/>) and generally accepted industry standards;

The assistive technology and information technology access equipment provided under this proposal will comply with the Technical Access Clause standards and guidelines as developed by the NITC's Technical Panel Access Work Group.

- Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.

The equipment being provided under this proposal build off of existing computer terminals that will be available in the One Stop Resource Centers.

Section VIII: Risk Assessment

Describe possible barriers and risks related to the project. The narrative should address the following:

1. List the identified risks, and relative importance of each;

See #2 response.

2. Identify strategies which have been developed to minimize risks.

The availability of staff at each of the One Stop Resource Centers to provide support for assistive technology users and to identify potential applications of assistive technology to increase employability, productivity, or access to information technology is a critical component of this proposal. This will be addressed in a formal written agreement with each One Stop Center prior to purchase and placement of equipment with the facility. Each One Stop Center will agree to provide a designated staff person to receive training from the Assistive Technology Partnership that will address the operation, use and potential applications of the assistive devices; and how to make appropriate referrals for any further assistance for assistive technology or information technology access.

Section IX: Financial Analysis and Budget

1. Provide the following financial information:

	GTCF Grant Funding	Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Other Funding Sources	Total
Personnel Costs			\$11,520		\$11,520
Capital Expenditures (Hardware, software, etc.)	\$25,000	\$76,390			\$101,390
Contractual Services					
Supplies and Materials					
Telecommunications					
Training					
Travel					
Other costs					
Total	\$25,000	\$76,390	\$11,520		\$112,910

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2. Provide a detailed description of the budget items appearing above.

Budget Description

In-kind match for personnel is based on time for set up of assistive technology equipment and training of staff at the One Stop Resource Centers (24 sites at an average of 8 hours per site for set-up, installation and training) for an in kind contribution of \$11,520.

Partners providing funding for the purchase of assistive technology will grant the funds to the Assistive Technology Partnership for this purpose. The Assistive Technology Partnership is providing \$10,000; Vocational Rehabilitation is providing \$25,000; and Workforce Development is providing \$25,000. The total funds available from partnering agencies is \$60,000. This is \$41,390 less than the projected total costs for the equipment purchases. The Assistive Technology Partnership will seek out discounted prices or donated equipment to reduce overall costs. This is estimated to amount to \$16,390 which is projected as additional cash match. This is a total of \$76,390 projected cash match.

\$25,000 is requested from the Government Technology Collaboration Fund for the purchase of assistive technology that can be used to demonstrate access to information technology.

The Equipment costs are detailed in section VII Technical Impact. The projected total equipment cost for all sites is \$101,390.

3. Match Requirement: This grant requires a 25% match from the agency. Please use the calculation below to ensure your application meets this requirement.

$$\frac{\text{Total Cash Match ①} + \text{Total In-Kind Match ②}}{\text{Total Project Cost ③}} \$ 0.25$$

$$\frac{\$76,390 + \$11,520}{\$112,910} \quad \$ \quad 0.78$$